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Africa  
(Ross Report)

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PORTUGUESE DELEGATION TO THE VI<sup>th</sup> ASSEMBLY  
OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

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**SOME OBSERVATIONS ON  
PROFESSOR ROSS'S REPORT**

**SUBMITTED FOR THE  
INFORMATION OF THE  
TEMPORARY SLAVERY  
COMMISSION OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS**

**(TRANSLATION).**

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GENÈVE  
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IMPRIMERIE DU JOURNAL DE GENÈVE  
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petent departments at Lisbon. As soon as the two colonies have sent the observations for which they have been asked, the Portuguese Government will be in a position to reply more fully to the Secretariat's letter and to the report which accompanies it. The Portuguese Government wishes to say that it is replying to the statements made in Professor Ross's report because this report was sent to it by the Secretariat of the League of Nations after examination by the Temporary Slavery Commission, which, before drawing up its own report, wished to hear any observations the Portuguese Government might wish to make.

I have the honour to be, etc.

*For the Portuguese Delegation to the VIth Assembly  
of the League of Nations.*

(Signed) AFFONSO AUGUSTO DA COSTA.  
Chairman.

GENEVA, September 26th, 1925.



## Some observations on Professor Ross's report on the employment of native labour in Angola and Mozambique<sup>1</sup>.

1. Far be it from us to question Professor Ross's good faith. He has endeavoured to be absolutely impartial in his report, but we notice that in spite of himself he has been influenced by suggestions that may have been produced in his mind by the echoes of the defamatory campaigns which have been conducted against certain colonial administrations, and which have specially injured the small countries who have no press with a world-wide circulation to combat the allegations published against them. He must thus have visited the two colonies with the pre-conceived idea that he would find there conditions and practices of a reprehensible nature.

We quote two examples in support of this supposition.

2. In the first place the title of the Report : "Report on Employment of Native Labour in Portuguese Africa", suggests that the Professor visited all Portugal's African possessions. He did not do so. He went to *Angola*, where he remained 45 days, and *Mozambique*, where his visit lasted 24 days.

In addition to these colonies, however, Portugal possesses in Africa *Portuguese Guinea*, the *Cape Verde* archipelago, and the islands of *St. Thomas and Prince*. In the two first of these colonies, no complaint has ever been made against the system of labour employment. In Portuguese Guinea the natives work freely on their land on their own account, and have full liberty to exploit their palm plantations. At Cape Verde the population is in a very advanced state of civilisation ; there is a college and several schools, and nearly all the administrative posts are held by natives educated in the Archipelago <sup>2</sup>. Like the other colonies, they elect representatives to the Portuguese parliament, and the Government of the mother country frequently makes them large grants when the drought, and perhaps also the occasional indolence of the population, causes a famine. As he has not visited all the Portuguese African colonies, we think it only right that in the title of his report Professor Ross should confine himself to mentioning the colonies in which he has been, so as not to give the false impression that what he relates in his report applies to all the Portuguese colonies.

3. A second fact also deserves to be mentioned. Although he did not visit the islands of St. Thomas and Prince, the Professor in the appendix to his report refers to the campaign conducted against the recruitment of natives in Angola to work in the cocoa plantations of these islands. He quotes the principal works published against the Portuguese administration, but he does not mention those which were written to defend and justify it. Nevertheless they are numerous, and include the remarkable publications of the British Colonel Wylie and those of M. Mantero and Dr. Antonio d'Aguiar. To be absolutely impartial, we think that, having mentioned the accusations made by Harding,

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<sup>1</sup> Figures in brackets indicate the number of the paragraph in Professor Ross's report alluded to. When pages are referred to, the figures are preceded by the word « page ».

<sup>2</sup> At Cape Verde there are 75 elementary schools and one college (secondary school). In 1919 there were 7,923 pupils in these schools, including 413 whites, 5,606 mulattos, and 1,909 negroes. Classified by age, their numbers were as follows : less than 9 years 1,466 pupils ; 9 to 12 years, 3,712 ; 12 to 16 years, 2,244 ; above 16 years, 507.

At Goa and Macao there are also colleges in addition to the elementary schools. Goa possesses the oldest medical school in the colonies, founded over a century ago.



Nevinson, Swan and others, he should have said that the White Books which appeared between 1912 and 1917 published the communications of the British Consular authorities at St. Thomas and Angola, and that these authorities have nothing to say against the recruitment, transport and treatment of the natives of Angola in the two islands of St. Thomas and Prince.

To do justice to the Professor, we recognise that he frankly admits that during his journey none of his informants so much as breathed the word "slavery" or "slave trade", and he never heard the slightest suggestion that in Portuguese Africa now there was any ownership of a black by a white. We regret, however, that, instead of praising the efforts of the Portuguese Government to bring about this state of affairs, he adds "the rise of the system of State requisitioning of native labour and State leasing of this labour to private parties frees the white man of all temptation to acquire ownership of the labour he needs" (page 61).

The inference is that the Portuguese Government, which abolished slavery in 1836 and which has made sacrifices of all kinds over a long period to combat this scourge effectively, as demonstrated in the report sent last year to the Secretariat, only did so in order to replace it much later by another system of oppression. (The report says that the natives declared that forced labour began in 1914 (page 13.)

Slavery had been stamped out of the Portuguese Colonies when it was still rife in the colonial territories of Germany and in many other countries in which it exists to this day, as the Temporary Slavery Commission's report shows. We therefore think that we were entitled to justice at the hands of Professor Ross without his attempting to belittle what we have accomplished in the interests of humanity.

4. The method followed by Professor Ross in his enquiry does not seem to us to have been that most likely to lead to reliable conclusions. This method is indicated in his report (page 5). The object of his investigation was to gather the significant facts as to the system of employing native labour followed in Portuguese Africa, or, to be more exact, in her two largest colonies.

To do this, the report goes on to say, it would have been fruitless to prosecute enquiries among the Portuguese officials, for the law under which labour is requisitioned by the Government in these colonies is well known, and any enquiries addressed to the officials would have elicited the response that they were proceeding in accordance with the law. The professor mentions that the law was well known to him ; he therefore could not expect such a reply, particularly as at Lourenço Marques he was told (89) that under the administration of the Governor General, Colonel Freire d'Andrade, not more than three months of labour were required of a native in a year, forced labour was properly paid for, and labour on the native's own farm and in the factories of the Rand was counted by the administration. This is just what the law prescribes, and the Professor regards these conditions as equitable ("Ideals. Can these not be realised?"). He could not therefore expect that the authorities, when acting in a different manner, should tell him that they were proceeding in accordance with the law. He could easily prove the contrary owing to his knowledge of the terms of the law.

5. In the Portuguese Colonies no law exists allowing labour to be requisitioned for any other purpose than the clearing and upkeep of roads connecting the native villages and those leading to the principal centres of administration.



For the rest, the law prohibits obligatory or forced labour except by decree of the competent tribunals, and as a punishment for an offence against common law.

Compulsory labour for public undertakings is an accepted practice in nearly every part of Africa, and in fact it is expressly authorised in the colonial mandates on condition that it is remunerated. In Angola and Mozambique, until quite recently, the work of clearing roads between the villages, which benefited the natives more than anyone else, was not remunerated. This constituted a kind of local "corvée" ("fatigue") of an occasional or regular character; it was a payment in the form of personal services of a kind which has always been recognised in the majority of countries, and which is still applied to-day in Portugal itself.

Moreover, the construction of roads is also of great advantage to the natives, because by allowing the use of Boer wagons and of motor-lorries they save them the labour of portage, which formerly employed tens of thousands of men, who were obliged, in most cases on their own account, to carry their produce to the factories on the coast to be exchanged for European goods.

6. Whatever may be the reason, the truth is that Professor Ross, in carrying out his enquiry in the two colonies of Angola and Mozambique, refrained from questioning the officials of the Government, who were acquainted with the motive of his visit to these colonies and placed no obstacles in his path; *at least that can be said for them.* We do not know whether he would have had the same freedom of action in all African colonies, particularly as he failed to inform the Governor General of his arrival. To this he may reply that he did not wish the authorities to be forewarned of his enquiry. But, however poor an opinion the Professor may have of the Portuguese administration, the latter would have had to be absolutely blind not to realise what he was doing in the country. The Governors of the two colonies knew perfectly well what was going on, but they wished to give the Professor every facility and leave him entire freedom of movement. Moreover, Professor Ross appears to have expected that no difficulties would be placed in his way. In the appendix to his report (page 61) he relates that in 1895 Mr. Joseph Burt, who was sent to Angola and St. Thomas on behalf of Messrs. Cadbury, Fry, Rowntree and Stellwerck, spent two years in the islands and on the mainland studying the recruitment and conditions of native labour. In his book on these investigations, "Labour in Portuguese West Africa", Mr. W. A. Cadbury does not mention that he met with the slightest opposition. What was done for a British subject at a time when a campaign was being conducted against our West African colonies would obviously have been done for a citizen of the great North American Republic.

7. Professor Ross having thus decided not to acquaint the Portuguese authorities with his arrival and the purpose of his journey, although they certainly would have done their best to assist him in his work, and particularly to enable him to check such information as he might obtain, we will now go on to consider the method he followed, to which the Portuguese Government ventures to draw the special attention of the Temporary Slavery Commission (page 5).

"We visited" said the report, "the native villages in the bush, gathered the people together, and, through an interpreter known to them and in whom they had confidence, questioned them as to their compulsory labour. In Angola 19 villages were visited from three centres no less than 200 miles apart. The facts as to many such villages were elicited from conversation with the chief, the native



pastor, or the native teacher. The statements were taken down just as they fell from the lips of the interpreter, and such notes formed the basis of this report. Data were secured also from labour groups encountered on the highway and from individuals. Altogether, for Angola, we have the experience of some 6,000 or 7,000 of the native population in three different provinces."

The Professor then goes on to enumerate the advantages of this peculiar system, which consists in only hearing a certain number of individuals supposed to represent one of the two parties concerned. The statements thus obtained were carefully taken down, and it is on the basis of these statements and of those of a number of Europeans whose names are not given that Professor Ross builds up a veritable indictment of the Portuguese administration.

8. Anyone having any knowledge of the psychology of African natives could have told the Professor, however, that the natives are in the habit of answering questions put to them by white men in the manner they think will be most agreeable to their questioner, in the hope of a gift. It is easy to obtain from one and the same native, and with the more facility the less civilised he may be, contrary replies to the same question, according as the latter is put. Everyone in Africa knows that.

Professor Ross does not know the native language nor, we believe, Portuguese, which is spoken by part of the population. He was obliged to employ several interpreters enjoying the confidence of the natives, and furnished by whom we do not know. But the interpreter he employed naturally translated in the manner he thought would most please the man who paid him.

9. There can be little doubt what would be the result of an enquiry conducted in this manner in any colony, if the natives were asked their opinion on the way they were treated by the representatives of the country which governed them.

Cape Colony, belonging to the Union of South Africa, is certainly one of those in which the natives are the most civilised and in which they enjoy the most extensive rights. Nevertheless, at their meetings and in their newspapers they make the most severe charges against the administration. If the Union Government were judged solely on their declarations the result would certainly be most startling, and would undoubtedly have very little resemblance to the truth.

South West Africa has been entrusted to the administration of the Union of South Africa by the League of Nations, to be administered under the laws of the mandatory power as an integral part of its territory. There have frequently been risings in South West Africa, and complaints have on several occasions been made by the natives. It can well be imagined what would be the result in this mandated territory of an enquiry carried out according to the method employed by Professor Ross, and it would hardly be just and reasonable to judge the South African administration on the results of such an enquiry.

10. But we will go further. The United States of America are a great country, which we admire. They have a large educated and civilised black population. Books, newspapers, and other channels of publicity inform us that this black population is not satisfied, and frequently complains that its members, although citizens of the United States by law, are not treated as such on account of the difference of race and colour. Would it be reasonable to judge the administration of the free American Republic on an enquiry carried out



on Professor Ross's system among the black or native population of the United States<sup>1</sup>?

When the Professor quotes the evidence of a mission physician (45), of a missionary station (68), of a native preacher (72), of a theological student (78), who must be difficult to find in Mozambique because no such students exist there, of a native pastor (80), etc., should it not have occurred to him that the inhabitants of the colony, and even a number of authorities, might be displeased to read what he had written and attribute the responsibility for these statements to persons who were absolutely innocent of them, and who perhaps disagreed with his view of the matter?

Did not the Professor realise that his enquiry, carried out in the space of a few days over a small portion of the two colonies, and without knowing the language of the country, and also the manner in which he carried it out, and the way in which he then generalises the *results of his observations* so as to reach unjustified, exaggerated or false conclusions, might have an opposite effect to that which he wished, and that this was perhaps not the best way to attract the sympathy and support of those in Portugal who, like him, wished to help the cause of the natives?

At Johannesburg there are nearly 80,000 Mozambique negroes working in the mines. The Professor availed himself of an interruption in his journey to have an interview, through an interpreter, with 35 of these natives. And, on the basis of this hasty interview, he publishes his paragraph 65, in which he enumerates a whole series of cruelties alleged to have been practised by the authorities, thus giving it to be understood that this represents the opinion of the Portuguese natives in the mines. Is it hoped that this kind of thing will encourage the authorities to give favourable consideration to these accusations? To suppose this would be to have little insight into human nature, and yet Mr. Ross is a Professor of sociology in a well-known University. We would like the Permanent Slavery Commission to compare Professor Ross's report with that of the International Bureau for the Protection of Natives, which is couched in the most correct language and based on the statements of persons who have lived for a long time in Mozambique and who are well acquainted with the native language and customs.

10 a. It is not only as regards the Portuguese colonies that Professor Ross displays a hastiness of judgment which one would hardly expect to find in a man of his position. Thus on page 49, in comparing what occurs in Mozambique with what occurs in Transvaal, the Professor says "the Dutch do not allow the blacks to own land". This statement proves once more that the Professor believes all that he is told and that he publishes it without taking the trouble to verify its accuracy. The question of land tenure by the blacks in the Transvaal is somewhat complicated, and the statement made is untrue. Anyone could have informed the Professor of this fact and saved him from making so serious a blunder. It is true that the Professor continually says "I was told", "I was informed", etc., but he does not seem to realise that the fact of publishing this information over his signature makes him in some sort responsible for its accuracy.

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<sup>1</sup> From the *Journal de Genève*, September 23rd 1925 :

Some country people of the Mississippi district tore from the hands of the police a negro whom the latter were taking to prison, drenched him in petrol and burnt him alive.

Again, the inhabitants of a small township in Georgia invaded the local lunatic asylum, seized a mad negro who had killed a nurse, tied him to a tree and beat him to death.



11. To be really impartial, Professor Ross should not omit to say in his report that the system adopted by the Portuguese administration in its colonies is one of friendly co-operation between the Portuguese of the home country and the Portuguese of the colonies, without distinction or prejudices of race or colour. These prejudices may be, and undoubtedly are, more painful for those who have to suffer from them, than the fact of being obliged by law to work for three months each year, with full and complete freedom of choice as regards the work they do and the time and place at which they will do it.

In the Portuguese colonies he visited, Professor Ross must have seen doctors, teachers, army officers and high officials who were born in our colonies, and he could have seen them also in Portugal itself if he had visited it, as for all we know he may have done.

11. a. In the Portuguese colonies all the administrative posts are filled indiscriminately by whites or by blacks. The salaries paid are the same in both cases and this, as Professor Ross is certainly aware, is not the case in the colonies of other countries, in which the negroes, owing to the fact that their needs in Africa are less than those of the whites, receive lower salaries than Europeans occupying the same posts.

12. A fact which must assuredly strike the observer is this :

The Professor, after interviewing so many thousands of natives and so many persons of other races, has hardly met anyone who did not speak to him in unfavourable terms of the Portuguese administration of the two great colonies ! And yet, at the last Agricultural Exhibition at Loanda, there were 400 native exhibitors who displayed the produce of their cultivation. Unfortunately, none of the 7,000 natives with whom the Professor spoke thought fit to mention this fact to him.

And yet, as soon as Professor Ross's report was published, several persons who know our colonies hastened to bear testimony in favour of our administration and to protest against the report of Professor Ross, who, according to an article in the *New York Commercial* of July 13th last, translated and printed by the *Diario de Noticias* of Lisbon, has also published a report on "Conditions in Soviet Russia". Unlike his experience in Angola and Mozambique, the Professor had nothing but praise for the liberty enjoyed in Red Russia.

Among these testimonies we may quote the following :

As soon as Professor Ross's report appeared and was quoted in the English papers, the Chairman of the Temporary Slavery Commission received a telegram, and the following day a letter, from Mr. *James Morris*, asking to be heard by the Commission. In his letter he said that he had been placed in charge of work at the port of Lobito and that he had had under his orders at least 1,000 native workers, and he wished to dispute the Professor's assertions. It may be remarked in this connection that Professor Ross quotes the statement of a gentleman whom he describes by the letter F., and who, he says, belonged to a large firm engaged on harbour works at Lobito. This Mr. F. claims to know that four-fifths of the wages of the natives had been remitted to the *chefes de posto* where the men were recruited, and that these *chefes de posto* had received the money, because they had sent a receipt, but he did not know what they had done with this sum.

How is this statement of the anonymous Mr. F's to be reconciled with that of Mr. Morris, who comes forward of his own accord and without hiding his



name, to say the contrary ? And yet both worked in the same place and in the same service.

This insinuation of Mr. F's, especially coming after others of the same kind, is intended to convey the impression that the *chefes de posto* keep the money remitted to them to pay the natives. It is not clearly stated that a robbery has been committed, but this is given to be understood. But the question which now has to be asked is whether such procedure is admissible, particularly when the intention is to accuse the administration of a country. Was not this Mr. F., whose words are quoted, but who dares not allow his name to be given — perhaps because there are Courts in the Portuguese colonies which punish slanderers — under the legal, or at least under the moral, obligation, if he had any misgivings as to the use to which the money was put, to find out whether it had been remitted to those to whom it was due ?

13. A missionary, who for 12 years belonged to the Catholic Missions (in Angola), and who then retired to the United States, wrote, as soon as he saw extracts from Professor Ross's report in the American papers, a very straightforward letter, in which he relates his experiences in the Colony and his impressions of the authorities of the country. We give a translation of this letter in the Appendix.

14. In Portugal and in our colonies, there are associations formed by the natives. The *National African League*, as soon as it became acquainted with the Ross report, took the initiative of sending to Geneva, at its own expense, a delegation, consisting of its Chairman, a Director, and the Secretary, to protest against this report, and these gentlemen handed their protest to the Secretary of the Temporary Slavery Commission, asking him to forward it to the Chairman. Although the autonomy and even the emancipation of the colonies forms part of the programme of this League, they thought it their duty to come forward in defence of a country which makes no distinction between its nationals, whatever their race or colour. In the Appendix will be found a copy of the letter they addressed to the Temporary Slavery Commission, and also a letter from the *Refinaria Colonial*.

15. We do not think it necessary to make any other quotations. We need only add that whole Lisbon press protested against the conclusions of the Ross report. There was only one exception ; one paper not only upheld the Professor's statements, but went farther and asserted the existence of slavery in our colonies. It should, however, be added that this paper was inspired from Moscow.

16. Proceeding in the manner we have indicated, and confining himself to noting the statements made to him without verifying their accuracy, Professor Ross sometimes reached the most amazing conclusions. We will quote two remarkable examples. On Page 46 of the report there is the following passage :

"A few years ago the Government allowed a gang of Portuguese to go about the country pretending that the cattle were sick and must be exterminated. They did not molest the mission herds, only the natives' cattle. They offered a few shillings per head, and if this offer were rejected they would shoot the cattle in the kraal ; so, naturally, the natives took what was offered. The



cattle were driven together, shipped and taken up to Johannesburg to be butchered. The thing was a big robber game, put through with the connivance of the Government officials."

This is an extremely serious accusation. It is so unlikely that Professor Ross, however bad an opinion he might have had of the administration, should have verified its accuracy before bringing it forward as a proof of the manner in which the authorities acted. Anyone at *Lourenço Marques* could have given him the necessary information. The facts are as follows: in the south of the colony of Mozambique, the cattle was very scanty and of very bad quality. The oxen were very small, and the natives had not the necessary knowledge to improve the breed. Nearly all the meat consumed at *Lourenço Marques* was imported from Madagascar. The Government had recently organised the agricultural and veterinary services, and for that purpose it had engaged several experts from the United States and from the Transvaal Veterinary Department, which was then, and we think is still, directed by the distinguished Dr. Theiler. He was good enough to authorise M. Conacher one of his ablest colleagues, to take charge of the veterinary services of Mozambique.

Soon after, the districts of Gasa, Lourenço Marques, and Inhambane were visited by *Texas fever* or *tick fever*. On M. Conacher's advice, and following the system which had been adopted in Transvaal in the districts affected by the disease, the veterinary department decided:

(1) That the transit of cattle from one district to another should be prohibited, and that cattle found to have disregarded this order should be slaughtered.

(2) That all cattle which was not shut up in enclosures surrounded by solid barbed-wire fences should be slaughtered and paid for at the current price of butchers' meat at Lourenço Marques.

(3) That this rule should be observed for 10 to 14 months, after which the restrictions should be removed.

The application of these measures, absolutely necessary though they were, met with the greatest resistance, particularly on the part of the religious missions and societies, and also of the Europeans. The district chiefs called together all the native chiefs to explain to them the purpose of these measures, and no great difficulties were encountered at their hands, because their herds were dwindling away decimated by the disease, without their obtaining any compensation. The best cattle from which it was proposed later, together with the imported cattle, to breed the live-stock of the provinces, was enclosed, when the owners requested it, by the administration itself. As a result of these measures the epidemic disappeared, the south of the colony to-day possesses an abundant stock of cattle of good quality, owned both by natives and by Europeans, and the colony is self-supporting in this respect. Not only is no more cattle imported from Madagascar, but a certain quantity can even be exported.

This is the truth regarding what Professor Ross calls a proof of conscienceless behaviour on the part of the Portuguese authorities, which he complacently relates with the most improbable details, for example, when he speaks of cattle "shipped" for Johannesburg.

The accusation made in the same paragraph with regard to the indifference displayed by the Portuguese authorities in cases of famine among the natives is on the same plane.



17. The following is a second example : on Page 36 of the report we read :

"In the *Diario de Noticias*, Lisbon, of August 6th, 1924, there is a telegram from Guiné about a native uprising in the *circumscrição* of Monsoa. Natives to the number of more than 1,000 have assembled, armed, and refused to work.

"I pondered over this. Why did they refuse to work ? A week or so afterwards, I saw in the Benguela paper that, ever since Norton de Mattos refused to let labourers go from here, the island of Sao Thomé had been getting its labour from Guiné. There now appears to me a reason for the armed strike."

Let us now see what was the truth. In the first place, the High Commissioner, Norton de Mattos, did not prohibit emigration to St. Thomas ; on the contrary, he promised the planters to help them on terms which he indicated to them himself.

Secondly the natives of Portuguese Guinea never went over to St. Thomas. This can easily be verified by consulting the statistics published by the Government of St. Thomas. Moreover, the negroes of Portuguese Guinea are sufficiently wealthy, and do not feel the need to emigrate. Nevertheless, although it would have been so easy to test the accuracy of his supposition, Professor Ross immediately mentioned it in his report.

18. The Professor lays great stress on the fact that the natives do not receive their wages, which are kept by the agents of the Administration (page 7, page 39, page 55, etc.).

It is possible, and indeed certain, that cases of this kind have occurred, but they are punished by the law, and when the Professor heard the natives complain of such treatment, he would have done both them and the administration a great service if he had advised them to send or take their complaints to the competent authority. The courts of Portugal and of her colonies are independent, and the judges cannot be transferred from one place to another without their consent.

On the other hand, it is not always advisable to believe what the natives say. A native works for a specified time and he receives his wages. Before returning home, he finds opportunities to amuse himself and spend his money. When he returns home his wives or his chief ask him what he has done with his wages ; he then says that he has not been paid. Many of the statements heard by Professor Ross can have been due to no other cause.

19. It will be well to summarise here the provisions of the law as regards the payment of natives engaged by employers.

To prevent the employers endeavouring to evade paying their employees the wages which are their due, payment must be made by or in the presence of the authorities. To protect the native against the blandishments of traders who try and sell him all kinds of useless goods which he is easily persuaded to buy, such as watches or bicycles that will not go, alcoholic liquors, etc., the employer must only pay part of the native's salary each month. The rest is payable at the end of the contract and must be paid by the authorities in the presence of the employer or his representative.

Such is the part played by the authorities in the payment of natives working under a labour contract. They act in a purely supervisory capacity.

19. The report says that in the administrative *circumscrição* (district) of Songo grave irregularities occurred as regards the recruitment of native work-



ers (page 7). This is true. But the Professor might have added what occurred in this case, and what might have occurred in the others which came to his knowledge, if his system of enquiry had been different.

A British officer who was in the country met the High Commissioner of Angola at Lobita, and told him that he thought it his duty to inform him that grave irregularities were occurring in the Songo district, which he had just crossed on a shooting expedition. He described to him what he had observed. The High Commissioner at once ordered an enquiry, which resulted in the immediate dismissal of several officials, and in the imposition of other penalties.

It will be seen that this officer thought it his duty to proceed in a different manner from Professor Ross, and that in doing so he served the cause of the natives much better.

It must not be forgotten that Angola is an immense country, and that there are still places in which the supervision exercised by the authorities is not as energetic as it should be. But this state of affairs is disappearing more and more, particularly as a result of the clearing of roads, which permit the authorities to move about more rapidly. Moreover, even in the most civilised and best-policed districts, irregularities and crimes are committed which do not immediately come to the notice of the authorities, and which the courts only punish later.

20. It would have been only fair if the Professor, when denouncing facts which he believed to be true on the basis of statements made to him, had taken the trouble to find out whether the higher authorities of the colony punished them. To do so, he need only have consulted the official journals of the colonies he visited. The Governments of these colonies have never denied that offences and even crimes are committed there. But they see that these offences are punished, and the official journal which publishes the penalties also publishes the reasons for which they have been inflicted. He would have seen that in a single year twenty officials had been punished and brought before the courts because they had ill-treated or permitted the ill-treatment of natives, or practised irregularities in the recruitment of labour. But this is not a proof that there exists in the colonies a system of labour comparable with slavery. If we take at random from the criminal registers of any country a series of crimes which have been punished by the courts, we cannot logically draw the conclusion that the country is one of assassins or robbers.

21. It is the roads and the improved means of communication which have permitted a more rapid administrative occupation of the country and a more complete supervision. But, at the same time, they have put an end to the isolation of certain hard cases who prefer to keep at a distance from the observation and radius of action of the authorities. Some of the Professor's notes probably come from these sources. He quotes them to show that the natives are ill-treated to the point of being compelled to build useless roads.

For those who are not acquainted with roads in Africa, it should be said that they are not macadamised roads such as are found in Europe. They are made simply by clearing the ground for a width of five to seven metres, and by cutting down the trees and pulling up the grasses and roots. When necessary, drains are dug. In certain districts, *pineapples* or other useful plants are planted along the borders for the use of the natives, who are the only people who profit by them. It will be seen that their construction does not involve very heavy labour, particularly as it is the only compulsory work which can be imposed on the natives and as they are the first to profit by it.



22. The report frequently refers to the *cipaïos* (native police). All Colonial administrators are familiar with the drawbacks of native police, which are daily minimised, however, as the administrative organisation improves.

The half-civilised native, as soon as he is invested with any authority, tends to abuse it ; this is what happens with the *cipaio*, but he is checked by the fear of losing his post and his wages. Notwithstanding the small number of abuses practised by the *cipaïos*, it is thanks to their activities, under the orders of their European leaders, that the crimes, extortions and acts of violence so common in native African communities have considerably diminished, and that the natives are no longer under the sole authority of their chiefs, who are often arbitrary and cruel, and of their medicine-men.

Although certain missionary organisations rendered valuable service in civilising and educating the natives, it has also happened on some occasions that, in settling in certain almost uninhabited regions of the colony, they established themselves as if they were absolute masters, and gathered the natives in "mission villages" in which they looked with a jealous eye on any action on the part of the authorities. Were not some of Professor Ross's interpreters chosen among the proselytes of these missions ? Everything points that way, as they have no liking for the *cipaïos*.

The native police service is as yet by no means perfect ; but as it cannot be replaced, efforts are being concentrated on improving it. The statements made to Professor Ross exaggerate the occasional abuses committed by the native police, which, moreover, are always punished when they are brought to the knowledge of the authorities. It could hardly be otherwise when the doings of the *cipaïos* are judged by the statements of those who sometimes feel the weight of their power.

23. There are a large number of plantations and factories in Angola and Mozambique, in which natives are employed. Professor Ross does not seem to have visited them, although it would have helped him to gain an idea of labour conditions in the two colonies. In Mozambique, where there are factories and plantations owned and managed by British subjects, he could have interviewed them in his own language, which would have safeguarded him against the mistakes which are always possible when interpreters are employed.

On page 7 of his report he says that a native told him that he had been recruited by Government agents and sold to the Petroleum Company. This company is a powerful American concern, which has been established for many years in Angola. It is regrettable that Professor Ross did not apply to his fellow-countrymen to verify the truth regarding the purchase of this negro, although they spoke his own language and could have given him useful information.

It seems, however, that he did not do so. He confined himself to recording in his notes that the negro said he had been sold by the Government, and with this Professor Ross was content.

24. If the opinion of all those who employ native labour had also been asked, a more correct idea of the truth of the statements made to Professor Ross by the natives could have been gained.

For instance, he would have been told that sometimes natives who have accepted a labour contract in due legal form, and received blankets and advances on their wages, disappear and return to their villages, keeping what has been given them. He would also have learned that sometimes natives working on the plantations go away without saying a word and without any plausible reason,



abandoning their work, which gives rise to difficulties of all kinds, especially if it happens at harvest time. In either case, the administration can rarely take any action on the complaints of the employers, for it is very difficult to trace the fugitives.

Although the agricultural and industrial undertakings cannot dispense with native labour, it is often very difficult to obtain even at high wages. The native has few needs, and makes his wives toil for his daily bread. Work has no attraction for him, and he does not feel the need of it. He often spends his day drinking native beer, chatting, and taking snuff. And therefore, since the welfare and development of individuals is in direct proportion to the material and economic development of their country, it is quite comprehensible that the authorities should exercise, albeit with great prudence and all the necessary tact, a certain moral pressure, which they are entitled to use by the very nature of the task they are called upon to perform.

25. In reading the Ross report, those who do not know the situation in Angola will certainly gain the impression that the whole population of the colony is overburdened with labour imposed by the Government, and that on that account they are unable to cultivate their land, which in any case, as we have already said, is cultivated by the women.

We therefore think it well to give here a summary of statistics carefully compiled by the Direction of the competent Department with regard to native labour.

In the eleven districts of Congo, Loanda, Malange, Cuansa Sul, Benguela, Bié, Mossamedes, Huila, Moxico, Cubange and Lunda, there are 559,192 young men fit for labour. The number necessary in these districts for all the requirements of commerce, industry and agriculture, and for the railways, ports and other public undertakings, is 186,811 workers. It will therefore be seen that there is an ample margin, and that the native workers can meet all demands made upon them without having to suffer heavy burdens.

26. Owing to his partiality, which makes him criticise even what has hitherto escaped all criticism, Professor Ross tells us on page 42, § 70, of his report that Government officials show no desire to settle in the country or to learn and study the native customs and language. On page 39 he quotes the statement of a certain Mr. E., who says that no white man from Portugal ever comes to the colony with the intention of doing a day's manual labour to gain his living. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Certain officials belong to organisations which are common to all the colonies, and therefore they can be transferred at the discretion of the Colonial Ministry and moved from one colony to another.

Professor Ross appears to base his statement on the remarks of a "thoughtful" merchant with whom he conversed in a town in Mozambique, and on those of a former Portuguese missionary whom he met near Inhambane. To ascertain the truth of these statements, Professor Ross could easily have tried to find out how many years the *administradores*, to whom he appears to be alluding particularly, remain at their posts. He would then have learnt that they were kept in their districts as long as their health did not make them incapable of performing their duties, and they were then placed on retired pay. They can, however, be dismissed for certain offences and after an enquiry.

27. The law encourages the Government officials to learn the native language, and pays them a special bounty if they do so. Nearly all the *adminis-*



*tradores* know the language of their district, but they must always use the Portuguese language in their official relations with the natives, for reasons which will easily be understood.

As the district *administradores* displayed a tendency to acquire property and land in the districts they administered, they were forbidden to do so, for it will easily be understood that they might use their authority in favour of their own enterprises and to the detriment of private enterprises or estates.

28. Professor Ross could have met many former Government officials in Mozambique or in Angola who have abandoned their administrative careers to become agricultural proprietors or to engage in private enterprises. In fact this constitutes one of the difficulties of the Government, which often finds its employees leaving its service to take up other work. Professor Ross was therefore misinformed by the merchant and the missionary, and did not take the trouble to verify their statements.

29. The Portuguese Government not only sends administrative officials to the colonies, but also workmen and artisans. In each Portuguese steamer sailing from Lisbon to the colonies, the Government offers from six to twelve free passages to those who apply for them, and these passages are always taken. Before and during Professor Ross's visit, hundreds of masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, etc., arrived in Angola from the mother-country. In the south of the colony there are fisheries run by fishermen from Portugal, who send salted and dried fish to Mozambique, Rhodesia, and most other parts of Africa.

On the Huila plateau, at Benguela, at Lourenço Marques, at Chimoio, and in fact almost everywhere, there are small farms run by Portuguese peasants.

30. The Professor says that he travelled from Beira to Umtali. In all fairness he might have noted in his report the contrast between what he saw in the Mozambique territory and what was to be seen beyond the frontier. On the Portuguese side the railway passes an almost uninterrupted series of well-cultivated farms; but the same is not the case on the other side. Unfortunately his bias did not allow him to see anything that could be placed to the credit of the Portuguese administration.

30. a. He says in this connection :

"For fifty miles along the railway, about half-way between Beira and Rhodesia, stretches a belt of excellent cotton soil on which perhaps 60 planters have settled, about half of them British."

It would have been sufficient for him to ask to see the report of the Native Labour Bureau of the Mozambique Company to ascertain that this was not correct.

According to the report for 1924, in the territory mentioned by the Professor, which includes the districts of Manica, Chimoio and Neves Ferreira, there were :

#### FARMERS.

	Total	Portuguese together with a few Greeks and Italians	British
In Manica.....	44	38	6
In Chimoio.....	130	96	34
In Neves Ferreira.....	44	31	3
	218	165	43



This was easy to verify. Most of the farmers indicated in the second column are Portuguese, but Professor Ross had the pre-conceived idea that the Portuguese did not work, and thus, when he saw farms in full process of exploitation, he immediately concluded they belonged to the British, without enquiring further.

31. Professor Ross might have seen that the statements made to him needed to be carefully verified. Past and present history should have convinced him of the colonising talents of the Portuguese, who emigrate and establish wealthy and flourishing colonies in foreign lands, thanks to their industrious habits. We need only mention those which exist in the Professor's own country, with their newspapers, their schools and their banks. And quite close to Angola, in the Belgian Congo, there is a large Portuguese population of agricultural owners and traders.

In Angola itself it may be said that there are no commercial and industrial enterprises which are not Portuguese, and Portuguese is the language which is heard everywhere. Even before the attention of the Powers had been drawn to tropical Africa, Portuguese had traversed, reconnoitred and in large part occupied the whole country. The statement made in the report that Government officials go to the colonies with the intention of staying there as short a time as possible, or just long enough to enrich themselves, is quite devoid of foundation. The facts are there to prove it.

The statement made by Mr. E., a railway executive at Lobito, which the Professor reproduces on page 39, is rather curious and requires some comment.

According to him, "the Benguela railroad is so loaded down by appointees forced upon it by the authorities that it cannot make any money for its shareholders". According to him, this proves the affirmation made above (see paragraph 26 of the present memorandum).

Mr. E.'s statements cannot be read without surprise being felt at such proceedings. The share capital of the Lobito Company has not (at least as regards the greater part) been paid up. The promoters of the company have kept it in their own hands, have issued debentures, and have never supposed that the railway would yield profits before it reached Katanga. The concessionaire should have constructed practically the whole of the line by the present date. Nevertheless, it hardly reaches half its total length. By the use of all kinds of influence, the concessionaire has persuaded the Government to modify the original conditions of his concession, otherwise it would have had to be cancelled long ago.

The construction having been undertaken in deplorable conditions, it is to a Portuguese, M. Marianno Machado, who died recently and who for several years was General Manager of the Lobito Railway, that is due the construction of part of the line and the regularisation of what had already been constructed when he took over the management. Contrary to all expectations he succeeded in making the railway pay while continuing the construction of the line. To do this, M. Machado had to contend with difficulties of all kinds, not the least of which was the fact that he was saddled with a mass of non-Portuguese employees who acted as if they were in a conquered country and did nothing but frequent bars and drink whisky instead of working. A great number were dismissed for this reason.

After several years of hard work, and after reorganising the whole concern,



M. Machado, who was already ill, was forced to resign owing to intrigues against him in London. He died soon afterwards.

It should also be added that the management of the Lobito Railway Company is in London, and that all appointments are made there. From what we have said, it is easy to estimate the value of Mr. E's statements, who has probably not forgiven M. M. Machado for having restored order during his administration.

31. *a.* Mr. Robert Williams the concessionnaire of the Benguela Railway, wrote to the Minister of Foreign Affairs as soon as he heard of Mr. E's statements, which were published by a Portuguese newspaper. In his letter he denies Mr. E's statements; Mr. Robert Williams even questions whether this Mr. E. had the standing of "railway executive" which is attributed to him.

32. Professor Ross states that the natives of Angola and Mozambique emigrate in large numbers to neighbouring countries on account of the treatment they receive in the Portuguese colonies. Movements of natives living near the frontiers take place nearly everywhere. To be able to assert that hundreds of thousands of natives emigrate to neighbouring territories, it would be necessary to have reliable statistics such as it is still impossible to arrange for in some parts of our colonies. In any case, incomplete though they may be, the statistics do not show any such large emigration as that with which we are reproached. In the territory of Manicas and Sofala, the statistics, which are comparatively complete, show that the natives, who had emigrated in large numbers during the world war on account of the operations against the Germans and the revolts which the latter had provoked, have returned to their country. The Sena Sugar Estates, which have the largest sugar-cane plantations in Zambesia, a district in which the Ross report denounces several abuses, informs us that it has permanently in its service thousands of natives from British Central Africa and even from the mandated territory of the former German colony of East Africa. And these statements of the Sena Sugar Estates could easily have been checked.

Tens of thousands of natives go every year to work in the Transvaal mines. Naturally it may be supposed that every effort is made to induce them to settle in that country. Nevertheless, the majority return, which would not be the case if they were ill-treated by the authorities.

33. Although emigration has not assumed the considerable proportions stated by Professor Ross, it nevertheless exists, and among its principal causes are the following :

(*a*) Activities of foreign recruiting agents who endeavour to obtain labour, especially for the mines, and when recruiting is forbidden, act clandestinely, especially in the frontier region.

(*b*) Natives unable to find work in certain districts of Angola near the Belgian Congo and Rhodesia cross the frontier to find employment on the other side.

(*c*) The policy, followed in certain neighbouring territories, of offering facilities to emigrants and exempting them from taxation for several years, in order to attract them across the frontier.

(*d*) The depreciation of Portuguese currency, which leads natives to go



where they will be paid wages in francs or sterling, with a greater purchasing power.

33. *a.* Professor Ross says that a certain Mr. W. (page 55) an English planter, believes that in the last five years 70,000 negroes emigrated from the territory of the Mozambique Company to Nyasaland and Rhodesia, in order to escape compulsory labour. This statement is repeated on more than one occasion (Pages 50, 66). The statistics of the population are compiled annually in the territory of the Company, and can be consulted by anyone. They give us the following figures :

Table of the native population in the territories of the Mozambique Company (From the Annual Report of the Labour Bureau).

	PORTUGUESE				OTHER NATIONALITIES				
Year	Men		Women		Men		Women		
	Over 18 yrs. of age.	Under 18 yrs. of age.	Over 18 yrs. of age.	Under 18 yrs. of age.	Over 18 yrs. of age.	Under 18 yrs. of age.	Over 18 yrs. of age.	Under 18 yrs. of age.	TOTAL
I901	40.125	28.423	53.342	24.281	1.270	10	—	—	147.451
I902	41.975	30.180	55.823	25.999	1.282	8	—	—	155.267
I903	47.920	34.230	65.670	33.147	1.280	14	—	—	182.255
I904	52.896	37.558	69.686	36.748	1.305	14	—	—	198.207
I905	56.432	39.994	74.520	39.262	1.377	14	—	—	211.599
I906	60.755	43.264	80.090	42.047	1.377	11	—	—	227.544
I907	62.124	45.830	81.693	43.649	1.580	11	—	—	234.887
I908	62.942	47.714	82.414	44.822	41	8	—	—	237.941
I909	65.262	51.837	82.195	48.466	2.174	14	—	—	249.949
I910	67.947	49.782	87.478	48.788	2.616	8	8	2	256.629
I911	69.869	56.255	84.902	50.496	323	8	6	2	261.861
I912	71.472	56.883	83.669	50.918	210	13	31	15	263.211
I913	76.686	54.199	89.488	50.538	589	14	42	5	271.561
I914	76.240	65.569	86.785	53.567	724	64	22	11	282.982
I915	77.943	63.544	91.940	56.074	564	30	20	9	290.124
I916	77.466	68.071	92.762	59.175	1.628	52	51	11	299.216
I917	78.631	71.277	90.111	59.979	904	154	32	38	301.626
I918	67.805	50.790	79.013	45.149	603	131	135	42	243.668
I919	73.203	50.368	82.939	44.876	1.112	85	151	42	252.776
I920	72.095	55.131	77.978	43.986	446	93	117	48	249.894
I921	78.190	53.202	83.737	45.988	1.611	46	33	15	262.822
I922	80.015	57.484	84.538	48.356	2.589	163	162	66	273.371
I923	80.171	61.728	83.472	54.733	2.550	267	93	47	283.061

The falling off observed during the year 1918 is due to the war and to the Barue revolts stirred up by the Germans. During this year there was also an epidemic of pneumonic influenza which caused great havoc among the population.

34. The report mentions (p. 25) the *plantations*, and alludes in places to Government plantations. The Government, however, possesses no plantations



either in Angola or Mozambique. All the plantations belong to private individuals or companies ; the Government has only some small experimental farms, employing few natives. It is hoped to add to the number of these farms.

35. On p. 29 of the report statements are made which, though considerably exaggerated, are substantially true. The *administrador* referred to did follow highly irregular practices, and was consequently dismissed at once by the Government and brought to trial. He and his family lived in poverty thereafter, which proves that at least he gained nothing by his malpractices. As he had contracted a serious disease, and had been acquitted by the Courts for lack of sufficient evidence, the Government, in recognition of his previous services, appointed him to a minor post, in which he died soon afterwards.

This *administrador* was harsh to all, both white and black. In every African colony there are officials who have become neurasthenic and cruel after long absence from the centres of civilisation ; a number of instances might be given. It will be realised, therefore, how hatred and ill-will were let loose upon this man after his disgrace and punishment ; and it is easy to see how his misdeeds came to be magnified and exaggerated when Prof. Ross asked for information about him.

All that really appears from the fact reported by Prof. Ross is that an official acted improperly, was severely punished, and died. It might have been more charitable not to reiterate these facts time after time in different forms.

35. It is regarded in the report (p. 6) as surprising that women with babies on their backs should be sent in place of their husbands to work on the public highway. This is, of course, mentioned as an appeal to pity and humanitarian sentiment ; but it is of no significance. African negresses never leave their children when they are very small, lest they should be stolen or eaten by domestic animals. They tie the children up and carry them about while they are working in the house or on the land, and even during the interminable dances of which, especially at night, the blacks are so fond.

36. The Professor quotes (p. 8 and elsewhere) statements made by the Ambaquistas — natives of the Ambaca region. These were the first natives for whom an attempt was made to establish schools : the first who were given any education — which, being unfortunately chosen, had unfortunate effects. Instead of being trained to learn trades, they were given an education with a more literary bias. Being intelligent people, they have done their best to profit by it, but in the wrong way — by gaining an ascendancy over the other blacks, whom they exploit to a large degree. Formerly one of their means of subsistence was dealing in powder and trade rifles ; and for that reason they did all in their power to stir up both tribal warfare and insurrections against the Government. The suppression of the trade in arms and powder, and still more the disarming of the natives, irritated them greatly. Indeed, living as they do by exploiting their fellow-blacks, they always dislike and try to frustrate the policy of the authorities. In Prof. Ross's questions they saw a chance to discredit the Government by true, false, or exaggerated answers, and they took that chance with joy and without the smallest scruple. Several of the statements on pp. 10-22 are the work of the Ambaquistas, who also naturally complained to the professor that (p. 9) "they cannot get ammunition for their old muzzle-loaders". They might have added that the muzzle-loaders themselves had been taken away because they made a wrong use of them.



37. In his investigations in Mozambique, Prof. Ross somewhat altered his methods. Most of his consultations and interviews were with missionaries and Europeans. He took careful note of the most fantastic statements, such as that of the theological student who said (78, p. 45) :

“I have seen a woman with a young child bound to her back and balancing a heavy load on her head, lose her child by drowning when, in crossing a river, the water grew deeper than expected and the woman was not free to use her arms to save her child.”

Is this credible ? And what was the man doing to watch the child drown without offering to help the mother ? This is an unlikely story — this of a mother letting her child drown for fear of wetting her bundle. If it ever happened — which we greatly doubt — it may have had another explanation which the Professor would have learnt on further enquiry. In point of fact, the natives of Southern Mozambique believe that babies cannot drown, but will float, and therefore need no care when a river is being crossed.

The report quotes statements which were not verified, and generalises from isolated occurrences to the conclusion that the two great Portuguese colonies are countries where the worst forms of the exploitation of man by man are condoned, if not encouraged. No word is said of the past and present efforts of the Portuguese authorities to remove imperfections which they are the first to admit — efforts to which Dr. Ross and Dr. Cramer owe it that they travelled peacefully and in complete safety, over good roads, in regions which a few years ago they could only have crossed in peril of their lives.

37. a. The Professor says that the farmers pay the workers 12 to 13 Portuguese shillings per month (page 52) “of which 4 shillings go to the Mozambique Company for recruiting expenses”. These words give the impression that it is the natives who pay the 4 shillings a month, but this is not so. It is the *farmer* himself who pays the 4 shillings to the Labour Bureau once and for all, and nothing is deducted from the wages of the native.

Professor Ross also says on page 52 that a Mr. F. who had been for some years warder of convicts at Johannesburg stated that the natives recruited in Mozambique for the Rand mines were sometimes collected by the native chiefs and handed over to the recruiting agents “tied up”. This statement is ludicrous. Mr. F. then adds “The Portuguese system of obtaining native labour is at bottom not different from that of the British and South Africans. . . . .”

37. b. Against all reason and justice Professor Ross says on page 59 that the Portuguese Government does nothing as regards schools, medical attendance, etc. It would have been easy for him, however, to consult the budgets of the two colonies and see what was spent under these heads.

Let us see what happens in Mozambique. We will find that it really needs a firm determination to find fault with everything to say that the Portuguese Government neglects to provide medical assistance for the natives. In the Mozambique budget Ross would have found that there are 52 doctors in the colony paid by the Government and that the services of six others were asked for, the establishment being 58. There are also ten chemists, 145 European attendants and 85 native attendants having followed nursing courses in the Government schools. There are also 52 hospitals or Health Boards directed by one or several



doctors. Lastly, the expenditure in the colony including the Health Service (1925-1926 budget) is as follows :

	escudos	pounds sterling
Health Services, Hygiene and Special Medical Assistance for the Natives...	2,084,935 \$ 00 =	£ 20,849 141,936

He might also have learnt that were special missions for vaccination, and also to combat sleeping sickness.

In Angola the number of doctors is even greater than in Mozambique.

If Professor Ross had compared our Medical Services and our organisation for the medical assistance of natives with those of almost any other tropical African colony, he would have found that ours was superior to most of them. This was also the opinion of the foreign doctors who took part in the Congress of Colonial Medicine at Loanda.

As regards schools for natives, the Professor, by consulting the Budgets of public education, could have ascertained how little founded were his statements alluded to above. Bot in Angola and in Mozambique there are numerous schools for natives, as well as technical schools and the Government also makes grants to the Portuguese missions. Natives are admitted as apprentices to the Government workshops and many remain as workmen.

37. *c.* Professor Ross frequently quotes facts to show the cruelty of the Portuguese towards the natives, and the iniquity of their treatment of the latter (Page 56) ; the Greeks are a curse ; the Banians are worse than the Greeks ; after them come the Italians, and the then Portuguese. (Page 54).

And yet the Portuguese have kept their colonies for centuries, and have never lost them owing to any agitation on the part of their native population, which have rather helped the Portuguese to defend them. Portugal has hardly any white troops, and in each of her two great colonies there are no more than 200 European soldiers. The natives live on their lands which have not be taken from them, and of which they have the full enjoyment. Revolts of the natives in the Portuguese colonies are extremely rare. The blacks enjoy the same privileges as the whites, and have the same rights, and yet a man like Mr. Ross, a Professor of Sociology, does not hesitate to publish statements like that we have just quoted, in complete disregard of the colonial history of a country like ours which he publicly accuses of cruelty and iniquity.

37. *d.* On several occasions in his Memorandum (Pages 8, 9, 12 and 15), the Professor says that some years ago (between four and eight years in case No. 4 on Page 8) natives were taken and sent to St. Thomas. From what he writes it is to be inferred that a large number of natives are annually sent by force to the cocoa islands. But as the Professor quotes (on Page 6) the "White Books" of Africa, No. 2, 1912, No. 2, 1913, No. 1, 1905, and No. 1, 1917, he must have read them, and from the documents which they contain he should have seen that the statements made to him could not be true.

We give below a copy of a letter addressed to the Portuguese Government by Lord Balfour.



« FOREIGN OFFICE, February 27th, 1917

« His Majesty's Government have been glad to learn that the recent report of His Majesty's Consul-General at Loanda on the conditions of labour in Angola and the Portuguese Islands has been a source of gratification to the Government to which you are accredited.

« Mr. Hall Hall's despatch will be published with as little delay as possible, and you should inform the Portuguese Minister for Foreign Affairs that His Majesty's Government hope that the effect will be to remove the boycott which has been maintained by British firms against the produce of the regions in question, as they themselves have formed the opinion that the general conditions there, the terms of the labourers contracts, and those on which they are renewed, and the conditions of repatriation, are entirely satisfactory.

I am,

&c

(signed)

A. J. BALFOUR ».

We have also thought well to add a table of the natives engaged in Angola during the last eight years, which is the period referred to by Professor Ross.

*Table of the Movement of Natives of Angola entering St. Thomas during the Years 1918-1925.*

Year	Entering St. Thomas	Repatriated.
1918.....	937	1,484
1919.....	5,399	1,333
1920.....	2,814	935
1921.....	108	282
1922.....	126	102
1923.....	12	173
1924.....	None	None
1925 (until September).....	"	"
	<hr/> 9,396	<hr/> 4,309

As will be seen, nearly half the natives entering St. Thomas during the eight years indicated by Professor Ross were repatriated. A great number of these natives renewed their contracts under the conditions laid down by law, and in circumstances showing that they did so entirely of their own free will. The good treatment they receive at St. Thomas, and the increase in wages on renewal of the contract have led a number of natives to prefer to remain in the island rather than return to Angola.

37. *e.* In the Report of the Labour Bureau of the Mozambique Company (Beira) for 1924 will be found the following passage :

(1) Number of natives who entered into direct contracts with their employers during the year..... 33,397

(2) Percentage of natives engaged through the intermediary of the authorities, as compared with the total numbers of the male population fit for work..... 19.3 per cent

The contracts indicated under No. (1) were for varying periods over one month.

The contracts made under the auspices of the authorities are for a maximum of six months.

It will therefore be seen that the natives are not so overburdened with labour as the statements made to Professor Ross would have us believe.

Moreover, the Professor quotes the statements made to him (94) by blacks whom he met on the way. They said to him : "They would rather not work, prefer to be at home, for their wives are troubled to have them away". Unfortunately many of the natives share this attitude and prefer not to work, and remain with their wives who work to feed them and provide them with drink. It is this fact which renders their moral and material development so difficult.

38. According to the report, the manager of a big English sugar estate told Prof. Ross that 4,000 natives, 3,000 on contract, there got a pound a month. Four-fifths had to be paid at their home station. He paid it himself in the presence of the *administrador*; otherwise, he said, they wouldn't get it. This is untrue. What the manager should have said is that he had to give the pay-sheets and the money to the *administrador*, who had the wages paid in his presence. That is as the law requires. As regards the statement that the *administrador* would have kept the money if the manager had not been present, it is absolutely gratuitous. The *administrador* in his turn might have said — perhaps with better reason — that the natives would never have got their money if it had not been paid in his presence. He might have remembered a certain contractor — not a Portuguese — who paid some hundreds of his labourers with excellent counterfeit banknotes which were really a wine-merchant's advertisements, and who then took refuge across the frontier without delay.

The manager of the sugar estate mentioned in the report is quite probably the same gentleman who economised on the natives' food and treated them so badly that complaints appeared in the Lourenço Marques newspapers and the authorities had to take action.

38. a. It may perhaps be well to quote here an extract from the report of a well-known expert, Mr. Peter Abel, who went to Angola as the agent of Messrs. Richard Crispin & Co., of 8, Lloyds Avenue, London.

He says, with regard to the Cassequel sugar plantations :

"This, certainly, seemed to be the case on his sugar plantation, 'Cassequel', near Lobito Bay, which we visited a few days later. There we found a particularly healthy-looking and well-housed gang, provided with medical attention, and hospital accommodation unsurpassed by anything to be seen in the British sugar colonies under exacting government supervision. It may, therefore, be assumed that there is no labour question."

Mr. Peter Abel visited Angola in the course of the present year (1925).

39. The report contains many references to the hut-tax, and leaves it to be inferred (though it does not definitely state) that this tax is also paid by women. (75 to 82.)

This is not the case. The hut-tax is paid by men only. It varies from 5/- to 24/- according to the wealth of the native. It is highest in the Lourenço



Marques and Inhambane districts, where the natives can afford to pay a high tax. It is lower in Angola than in Mozambique.

On the Zambezi, following a traditional custom, instead of the hut-tax there is a poll-tax payable by both men and women; this system has been in operation for centuries, and the natives are used to it. On an average the poll-tax is lower than the hut-tax.

40. The hut-tax, the only tax the natives pay, serves both as a source of Government revenue and as a means of making the natives work to earn the money to pay it. Every year, before the time for payment, a census of huts is taken. In each administrative district an official, generally the Secretary (69), goes through all the "countries" and notes the huts, while the natives do their best to hide them. It is a well-known fact that, according to native custom, if a man has several wives, each of them, with her children, must occupy a separate hut; but in some cases natives try to evade the tax by building large huts to accommodate several wives.

The small buildings erected by the natives — whether as barns, or as shelters to talk in, or as temporary premises for other purposes — are not subject to the tax, which (as already stated) is payable by men only. It is clear, therefore, to what extent the statements quoted on p. 47 of the report (82) are exaggerated.

41. Following statements made by natives, Prof. Ross says that workmen such as masons and carpenters are requisitioned and receive no pay. A few such cases, in flagrant contravention of the law, may have occurred, but, if so, they are abuses; more probably the natives in question had been sentenced to imprisonment for minor offences, and were serving their terms at the capital of the administrative district. In that case they would have to work if the sentence involved hard labour.

The Portuguese Government has tried to direct native education into the vocational channel. Thus at Drando, St. Paul de Loanda, Prof. Ross must have seen many natives engaged on public buildings and in factories and workshops. Their wages, though lower than those of the white labourers, are fairly high, and closely approach the others. On the Zambezi negro artisans of every kind are to be found, even goldsmiths, who are very clever at their trade. Many young men are admitted to the Government workshops to learn a trade. In the hospitals there are schools for native male attendants, to which the blacks are admitted free of charge and receive their keep during a period of probation.

It is impossible, therefore, to say that the Government neglects the vocational training of the natives, and still less does it discourage them from working at their trades.

41. On p. 40 the report again leaves it to be inferred that the natives do not receive the whole of the wages paid by their employers. It then adds: "Work on Government docks, etc., is done under contractors, so the men get their two pounds ten each". There is a suggestion here that if the natives did not work under contractors they would not get their money.

At the ports and on the railway there are thousands of natives working for the Government and not through contractors; they are paid directly by the Government, and they receive their wages. What, therefore, is the point of the sentence quoted above?

42. On p. 42 of the report we find : "He (a certain merchant) has shown them (the *administradores*) ways in which the natives might be encouraged to till the rich soil of the bottom lands of the Limpopo, but they only shrug their shoulders". In point of fact, for some years past the Government has been spending several thousands sterling on getting Mr. Balfour, an engineer who is expert in these matters, to work out plans for the irrigation of these lands. A few years ago it went so far as to acquire a set of Fowler ploughs, which were placed free of charge at the disposal of the Chai Chai municipality, whence the lands on the lower course of the river are administered. It will be seen, therefore, that in this matter the Government has done a good deal more than shrug its shoulders.

43. As to the method of collecting the hut-tax, it is stated on p. 44 that the natives cannot pay it to the policeman nor at the administrative headquarters, but must "traipse around with him while he makes his rounds, lasting two or three days", as if they were in custody, and end up with him at the office of the Secretary, where the tax is paid. "The system", says the report, "is contemptuous of human dignity."

We do not know from what source the Professor got his information. The tax is taken by the collector, who travels round the native villages for that purpose, and gives receipts to those taxpayers who have paid. The natives may also pay direct to headquarters. Only those who have not paid either the collector or headquarters within the time allowed are called by the police before the *administrador*. It will be seen, therefore, that the statement made by the people of Village A (74) is incorrect, and we admire the ingenuity of those who invented it for the Professor's benefit. If the system described on p. 44 were followed by the Government, the tax would never be collected.

44. Frequent reference is made to the duties paid by natives returning from the Rand mines (p. 48). At first natives returning from the mines paid no customs duties, because they brought very few goods. Later, however, they got into the habit of buying useless articles by the thousand from the banians (Indian merchants) of Johannesburg, and they had to pay duty like everybody else. The Transvaal merchants complained, and the Union Government decided to pay 7/- for every native crossing the frontier by rail, while the Customs let them go through with the goods which they had been induced to buy.

The natives bring their money from the Rand in English banknotes ; these are not allowed to circulate in the colonies, and the law makes persons tendering them liable to certain penalties and to the confiscation of the money in their possession. To prevent the native being cheated by money-changers, the Government has established an exchange-office at the frontier, where English money is exchanged for Portuguese at the official rate (not pound for pound as stated on p. 48 of the report).

On the same page it is stated that the native returning from the Rand is mulcted for the privilege of earning money outside the country. This is incorrect. Indeed, Prof. Ross himself says that testimony on this point is conflicting and is not clear whether this payment is always demanded, is authorised, or is uniform in amount. That being so, it might have been better to say nothing.

The report speaks of the exploitation of natives returning from the mines. This is inevitable, and the labourers suffer from it just as much in the Transvaal, at the hands of the Indian traders, as in the Mozambique Territory.



Indeed, their character exposes them to it ; it is comic to see a native returning from the mines with a little money, followed by a porter carrying his luggage, and to see how he buys things that are of no use to him because he sees white men buying them. It will be realised, however, how difficult it is to stop him from wasting his money. The Government has tried to cope with this situation by establishing a savings-bank at Johannesburg, where the native can deposit his wages and be paid a cheque when he gets home. This system has proved successful in a few places, but the native prefers to carry his money on him and spend it as he likes.

45. The practice prescribed by law, of paying part of the wages to the natives in person every month and part on the expiry of their contracts at the headquarters of the authority which made the contracts, has two reasons.

(a) Some employers did not pay their workmen at all, or paid them less than their due. Some ill-treated them to make them run away, so that they would not have to be paid. They resorted to every subterfuge to evade payment. When the authorities intervened, the natives, having gone home, did not come forward to make their complaints, and there was the utmost difficulty in proving offences before the Courts.

(b) When the natives are paid every month, they find themselves surrounded by all kinds of traffickers and persons who try to make them waste their money on useless trifles. In some cases the employer himself keeps a store under an assumed name close to the pay-office, and attracts the natives into it in order to make them spend their wages on his premises, thus taking back with one hand what he pays out with the other.

Thus at the end of his contract the native comes home penniless, and is not thereby encouraged to re-engage for another term.

The law requires that the unpaid portion of the wages shall be handed over to the administration to give to the natives ; the employer or his representative must accompany them and be present when the money is paid. In this way the law prevents the native from being cheated by the employer, and protects him from himself.

There have been *administradores*, says the report, who have kept some of the natives' money. That is quite true — so true that in the Official Journal we read of officials being punished for doing so. It happens seldom, and we are obviously more likely to find employers trying to swindle the natives out of their wages than to find dishonest officials — the more so as the Governor can dismiss these latter without applying to the Courts, whose procedure is never expeditious. At the same time the disciplinary punishment of dismissal does not save the offender from the arm of the law.

46. Not long before Prof. Ross arrived in Angola, in July 1923, Loanda, the capital of the colony, had been the scene of the first medical congress held in an African tropical colony. Both local and foreign doctors attended the congress, which yielded most remarkable results. It received favourable notice in Portuguese and foreign reviews, such as the *Revue médicale* and the *Revue de Médecine tropicale*. At this congress attention was given to the medical services in Angola and the medical assistance provided for the natives. The records

of the congress have been published, and will be deposited by us at the Secretariat.

Considered as a whole, the medical services in Angola may be still inadequate, but are indubitably among the best when compared with those of several other African colonies ; and this shows what importance the Portuguese Government attaches to that branch of its administration.

Even before sleeping sickness had been studied with the attention it deserves, the Portuguese doctors had already obtained excellent results, including the freeing of Prince's Island from this dreadful disease after a noteworthy campaign. Reports on this subject have been published in Portuguese, French, and English.

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We have now, we think, said all that is necessary in justification of the conclusions we shall offer below ; but before reaching them we should like to put forward certain considerations suggested by Prof. Ross's report.

We have already said, and we say again, that we cast no reflexion whatever upon Prof. Ross's good faith, and that we have the utmost respect for the distinguished persons who introduce him, some of whom are personally known to us through our fellow-countrymen in America. But we may perhaps be allowed to think that the Professor's somewhat extremist ideas, which are well known through his publications, must have coloured the preparation of his report.

The very genuine and sincere philanthropic spirit of America, directed against those abuses and oppressions which are all too common in this world, has been roused by charges levelled — possibly with ulterior motives — against the Portuguese colonies. This spirit has led to most admirable work both in America and elsewhere ; time after time it has effectually relieved the sufferings of distressed humanity, and to-day it is more powerful than any other force in mitigating the horrors of poverty, disease, and many other afflictions ; but it does not always quite realise the difficulties with which other nations have to contend.

48. In recent years Portugal has had to meet many such difficulties. The disturbances which preceded and attended the change in her form of government were followed by those due to her entry into the world war, which led to so much economic, political, and social dislocation. In a democratic spirit worthy of all praise, the Republican Government granted the colonies a wide measure of autonomy, which they have not yet entirely learnt to wield with discretion. But all this is no reproach to a country which was the first to establish itself in Africa, and which by its labours there cleared the way for later comers.

Visiting the Portuguese colonies in Africa, particularly Angola and Mozambique, seeing what has been done there, and above all how Portugal treats the natives as the equals of citizens of the home country, how can we admit without careful investigation charges brought, unsupported by any kind of evidence, by people who have a natural tendency to look with hostility upon the acts of the country which governs those colonies ?

49. At the close of his report Prof. Ross offers his "Alternative lines of colonial development". For the benefit of those who have not read the report, and because its conclusion is of interest to all concerned in colonial administration, we reproduce it here.



### *Development of native peoples.*

"Before the whites came these African natives had made considerable progress in the industrial arts. They smelted iron and native smiths made tools, implements and weapons of iron. They had chickens, pigs, goats, sheep, cattle and dogs. They grew various crops. They were backward chiefly in making cloth. Now for such people one path of advance is the development of cultivation by the natives themselves. Mission schools may implant new wants — for clothing, better homes, cleanliness, sanitation, decency, chairs, tables, raised beds, cook stoves, schooling for children, eventually perhaps newspapers, books, amusements. At the same time the mission schools will show how to produce the means of gratifying these new wants. The brighter youths will learn carpentry, masonry, tailoring, iron work, brick-making, weaving, gardening, farming, poultry raising, bee keeping. The girls will learn to cook, sew, keep house, spin, make garments, weave baskets. The natives will be made acquainted with better methods of farming, better types of implements, improved varieties of domestic plants, fowls, animals. The world outside will obtain the cotton, sugar, coffee, rice, cocoa, palm nuts and sisal which this part of Africa is fitted to produce. But from them the blacks will obtain a due equivalent so that here a decent Christian civilisation will develop.

### *Barbarism.*

"On the other hand, the Government may by grants create great estates of from 10,000 to 30,000 acres, tilled by unpaid conscripted natives working under the hippo lash. Cowed and discouraged the natives will have no incentive to acquire skill. As life becomes harder for them, the shoots of the higher civilisation among them will wither. They will take up with vices which help them to forget their hopeless lot. The dominant whites will object to the missions teaching the 'niggers', 'putting notions into their heads', making them 'uppish' and 'above their station'. The *fazendas* (estates) will come eventually into the hands of the more ruthless whites, for they can make more money out of them than the humane sort can, and will be able to offer more purchase money for them than the humane can afford to refuse. These unscrupulous and cruel whites will go about in motor cars, snatch comely black maids to gratify their lust, intimidate the blacks with *palmatoro* and *chicote*, and maintain handsome motor roads, plantation homes and government buildings with unrequited native labor. In the use of machinery, the applications of science to industry and the adoption of luxuries, this regime will look like civilization; but in reality it will be but a veneered barbarism.

### *The choice.*

"Which of these two types will prevail depends upon things which are yet to happen. It is certain, however, that one type or the other will win. An African colony cannot persist half the one thing and half the other. Free labor and forced labor will no more mix than oil and water. Provide the planter with as much forced labor as he requires and the hours, pace, treatment and pay of labor will become such that no free laborer in his senses will take employment with him."

50. Such are the ideas of Prof. Ross and the spirit in which he conducted his enquiry. He sets before us a dilemma. Either the blacks must be free,

under the direction and guidance of the missions, or they must be herded together on great estates under the lash. He cannot see the possibility of any other system. Naturally, therefore, he sees no room for hesitation ; the first system alone can lead to a decent Christian civilisation.

We should very much like to have the opportunity of observing an experiment of this kind, so long as it was not made in the Portuguese colonies. If such an experiment had been made there, we are quite sure that the Professor would not have enjoyed the facilities he did in travelling through the colonies. We do not deny the good influence of the missions ; indeed, we may take the opportunity of pointing out that Portuguese missions have done great things in the world. Centuries before the Professor's country reached the great and powerful position which it holds to-day, Portuguese missionaries were travelling all over Africa and a newly-opened world to spread the word of Christ, fearless of martyrdom, seeking it, indeed, with the enthusiasm of a deeply-rooted faith. Prof. Ross is a professor of sociology, and doubtless knows all this. Those missionaries went to Africa, and traces of their good work are still clearly visible in Angola, on the Zambesi, and in Abyssinia. They also went to China, to the East Indies, and even as far as Japan to spread their faith.

Even to-day the memory of the great Portuguese missionary St. Francis Xavier is still living in Portuguese India, and attracts thousands of Indians from every quarter. The influence of the Portuguese missions is recognised by the Holy See. We in Portugal know well how great is the influence of the missions, but we do not think that that influence can civilise Africa unaided. Their mental effect upon the natives is a valuable help, but if it is to have its full force they must be supported by the Government.

51. Happily, the two systems depicted by Prof. Ross are not the only ones possible. There are others, varying in character with the conditions obtaining in the countries where they have to be applied, the qualities and potential capacities of the races which live there, and many other factors, all of which have to be taken into account.

52. The Professor's curious idea of leaving the African colonies entirely under the influence of the missions (of what denomination ?), and also the fact that in Angola he found a number of interpreters to enable him to converse with the natives, might suggest that he had been influenced by certain missions which, having gone beyond their sphere, did not look upon the High Commissioner, General Norton de Mattos with a friendly eye.

In point of fact, English-speaking natives are seldom met with in the Portuguese colonies on the west coast of Africa unless they are attached to missions. But the Professor not merely employed interpreters, but selected those who had the confidence of the natives whom he visited in the course of his journeyings in different districts. Were not these interpreters supplied by the missions to which we have referred ?

As, however, the report states that neither Prof. Ross nor his companion was connected with a church or with foreign missions, we accept that statement.

In regard to native labour, the Portuguese Government has set forth the main principles of its legislation in a note which was submitted by the Portuguese Delegation to the Sixth Committee of the Sixth Assembly in connexion with Lord Cecil's protocol. We reproduce here the essential passage only.

(Extract from the Portuguese Delegation's note). "Article 3 of the draft Protocol deals with forced labour, which, if abused, may be tantamount to a



form of slavery. Before going further, the Portuguese Delegation desires to declare categorically that its Government is of opinion that compulsory labour imposed upon natives should be employed as little as possible, and only for essential public works and services, and that this kind of labour should not be employed for private enterprises. Having stated this point quite clearly and without circumlocution, the Portuguese Delegation will proceed to set forth the reasons why it cannot without reservation accept Article 3 in its present form, not on account of the principles it lays down, but on account of its wording, and therefore of its interpretation and execution.

“What is *forced labour*<sup>1</sup>, or rather *compulsory labour* ?

“We must distinguish between compulsory labour, which should be avoided as far as possible, and the obligation to work, which is a law of nature, and the scope of which the very progress of our civilisation tends daily to enlarge. We must not forbid compulsory labour in such a way as to suggest to the native races that its prohibition implies for them a right to idleness, and a permission to emancipate themselves from that law of work to which we are all subject. This would be dangerous for everyone, and for the natives themselves, because, as we have said, their well-being and development must proceed hand in hand with the economic development of the country. This development can only be achieved by science, capital, and the labour of the colonising race, working in close cooperation with the native population.

“It will be seen, therefore, that the question is a very complicated one, and is made more so by the variety of circumstances obtaining in the different African colonies. That is why the Temporary Slavery Commission used the wording it did in Suggestion B of Chapter VII of its Report (pp. 13, 14), in which it laid down general principles and gave to its recommendations a very necessary elasticity, which does not seem to us to have been taken into consideration when Article 3 of the draft Protocol was drawn up. And that is also why, in paragraph 128, p. 15 of the Report, the Commission states that ‘to propose labour legislation for backward peoples would be to undertake a task which lies entirely outside the competence of the Temporary Slavery Commission, the more so in that the Treaties of Peace have created the International Labour Organisation, which is particularly well qualified to deal with this question’.

“The Portuguese Delegate has upheld these views for a long time past. The laying down of general principles by which all labour legislation for backward peoples should be bound falls within the competence of the International Labour Office, which will certainly not be able to accomplish it without taking the opinion of experts in colonial administration.

“The problem to be dealt with by Article 3 is therefore so complicated that the Portuguese Delegation does not think it possible to accept the extremely vague terms in which the Article is couched. For if this Article were interpreted in such a way as to ignore the suggestions made by the Temporary Slavery Commission (5B, pp. 13, 14 of the Report, paragraphs 112, 116), grave difficulties might be created for States possessing colonies, especially in Africa. They might be accused on the one hand of not respecting the provisions of Article 3 of the Protocol, as now proposed, and on the other, if by too rigid an interpretation

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<sup>1</sup> We are of opinion that the phrase « *compulsory labour* » should be used as being more suitable. *Forced labour* might mean that to which the courts may condemn certain criminals under common law. At any rate, the Portuguese penal laws have imposed such a penalty for nearly a century.

of the same Article they deprived themselves of local labour, they might equally be accused of not adequately developing, in the interests of mankind as a whole, the riches and resources of the African countries placed under their sovereignty.

"For these reasons, the Portuguese Delegation, while fully approving the general tenor of Article 3, cannot accept it in its present form, because its wording lacks that clarity and precision which are demanded by a question vital to the development both of the colonies and of the natives."

53. The principles set forth above are those on which Portuguese legislation on the subject of native labour is based.

But, says Prof. Ross, the law is put into effect in such a way that all kinds of abuses are committed ; it is not the law, but its enforcement, that is at fault.

The Portuguese Government does not deny that natives have been maltreated and their wages in some cases withheld by Government officials, or that the *chibalo* is in use ; how could it do so when the *Official Journal* states that officials have been punished for these practices and records the reasons for their punishment ?

All such acts are offences, and are dealt with by the Courts or by the proper authorities in the same way as crimes wherever committed.

As we have observed, the situation in Portugal has been very difficult in recent years, partly owing to internal disturbances and partly to the after-effects of the Great War, in which she was engaged. These disturbances have affected some of the colonies, producing a situation in which the power and influence of the authorities has been weakened. But in what country has not something of the same sort occurred ?

54. At the same time there was a renewal of activity in the African colonies, and a strong desire for rapid progress. This led to an increased demand for labour, while the natives, who were in many cases indolent and whose wealth was increasing, refused to seek employment.

As a result, certain local authorities, finding themselves hard pressed on all sides, and realising that the development of the natives must proceed hand in hand with that of the country, abused their powers, and, instead of enforcing the letter of the law, exerted, despite frequent warnings from the Minister for the Colonies, an illegal pressure on the natives. That is the origin of the practice of *chibalo* for private enterprises, which the Portuguese Government is the first to condemn.

There must not, however, be any illusion as to the extent to which this abuse is prevalent. The natives complain of compulsory labour (*chibalo* in Southern Mozambique) even when they are requisitioned for essential public works (in the Portuguese colonies highways are the only public works considered essential for the purposes of compulsory labour) ; they also complain of the labour imposed on those sentenced to imprisonment for petty offences (larceny, drunkenness, etc.).

55. As soon as the tenor of the Ross report was known in Portugal and in the colonies, it provoked a wave of indignation ; and, by reading in it certain statements which were improbable or known to be false, people were led to suppose that there was no truth in it, or at any rate that a few malpractices such as might occur anywhere had been exaggerated with the object of discrediting the Portuguese administration.



Why, it was asked, did the Professor make his investigations in two of our colonies only, and nowhere else? Why did he choose this moment to publish his report? Why did he pursue a method which would have yielded bad results anywhere? Why did he confine his interrogatories to natives who were naturally inclined to malign our administration, and to foreigners, many of whom no doubt think that our colonies would be much better managed by their own Governments?

Is it fair, people asked, to print, unverified, all kinds of statements from all kinds of sources, thus leading the reader to believe that all the facts stated are correct? Why are the names of the Professor's informants so carefully withheld? If the facts were correct, what would those informants have to fear? Why did they not notify the authorities, or make complaints?

And how can any man, however intelligent and capable, spend 24 days in a country unknown to him, where he does not understand the language, and then think himself entitled to pronounce judgment on the administration of that country?

These and other questions have been asked in the Portuguese press, with the effect of greatly exciting public opinion, so that the Ross report has been credited with intentions and objects which, we are wholly convinced, were not in the Professor's mind. But we regret that he should have proceeded as he did, because, instead of producing a valuable and suggestive piece of work which would have been of use to the Portuguese Government, he has only succeeded in ranging against him even those who have the welfare and development of the African native no less at heart than he. No man likes to see his country unfairly treated.

56. The foregoing survey may be summarised as follows :

#### I.

The conclusions of the Ross report cannot be accepted, because :

(a) It is based only on statements made by natives, who are always ready to say what they think will please, and to complain of those who govern them.

(b) The author of the report, being ignorant of Portuguese and the native languages, was obliged to employ interpreters, some at least of whom may be suspected of an inclination to depict the actions of the authorities in dark colours.

(c) The report is not impartial, despite the intentions of its author, who arrived in Africa with the ideas on colonial administration which he sets forth on p. 59 of the report, and with a knowledge of the campaigns which were being pursued against the Portuguese administration and the publications which had been issued in reply.

(d) He carefully conceals the identity of his informants; this is comprehensible in the case of natives, but inadmissible in the case of Europeans, particularly foreigners.

(e) He accepts totally unverified statements, even of the most improbable kind, such as the stories of the cattle massacre in Mozambique and the woman who let her child drown to keep her bundle dry.

(f) Drawing extremely wide generalisations from unverified information obtained as described above, Prof. Ross reaches conclusions which cannot, the Portuguese Government is convinced, be accepted even for the purposes of information by the Temporary Slavery Commission.

(g) Prof. Ross visited only certain parts of the two colonies, and remained there so short a time (24 days in Mozambique) that he cannot have obtained an accurate idea of the conditions prevailing.

## II.

The law of native labour in the Portuguese colonies is humane and provident, and the Government enforces it.

We may quote the following illustration :

The Governor of Timor recently issued a decree, which received the approval of his Council, to the effect that compulsory labour on public works should be required for one month in every year and need not be remunerated ; the Minister, though his policy is to allow the colonies a wide measure of administrative and financial autonomy, annulled this decree as soon as it was brought to his notice.

## III.

Illegal acts such as those mentioned in the report are punished by the authorities as soon as they have knowledge of them. Their more frequent occurrence in recent years is due to the unstable situation in Portugal.

## IV.

The Portuguese Government wishes to draw the attention of the Temporary Slavery Commission to the system for the development of native races advocated by Prof. Ross on p. 59 of his report.

## V.

Although the report deals solely with the employment of native labour, we think it would have been only fair to make some slight reference to the treatment which natives receive both in our colonies and in the mother country without discrimination of race or colour, the result of which is that Portugal governs her colonies almost without military forces, and at the same time without social disturbances.

## VI.

Should the Angola and Mozambique High Commissioners wish to offer any observations on the Ross report, which has been forwarded to them by the Portuguese Government, their replies will without delay be communicated through the Secretary-General to the Temporary Slavery Commission.



## ANNEXES.

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*Letter from the Rev. Fr. José Pacheco Monte, Missionary,  
to our Minister in Washington.*

Sir,

You ask me to tell you, sincerely and simply, what I saw and observed in the course of twelve years of missionary life in Angola and on the Congo in regard to the treatment of our native subjects in those parts. I shall have much pleasure in complying with your request by giving you some information — though quite briefly — as to the native labour law, the wages of apprentices and workmen, road-making, native officials (*cipaios*), the relations between Portuguese colonists and natives, the Portuguese Government's work for the improvement of public education and health, and the justice it administers to the native. I trust that my unvarnished statements of fact will serve as a brief reply to the principal charges brought against us by Dr. Edward A. Ross, Professor of Sociology in the University of Wisconsin.

*Native labour.* — Up to April 1924, when I left Africa, I never heard of any law affecting native labour which could be called cruel or unjust. Labour was compulsory only when it was required by the State, in which case fair wages were paid, and the work never lasted longer than three months. Private and agricultural enterprises engaged their own labourers, who undertook to work of their own free will. The Government did sometimes help agricultural concerns by supplying them with labour when they needed it, but, as I have said, never allowed the period of work to exceed three months. Labour contracts for longer periods were entirely free contracts made between the native and the other party concerned in the presence of the civil authorities. It can hardly be maintained, therefore, that the native has no time to work in his own fields and gardens, when he has nine months free in the year. Besides, it must be remembered that in Africa field-work is done by the women, with rare exceptions. When the negro is not working for the Government or private concerns, he spends all his time in hunting, fishing, and sleeping. Compulsory labour! There are plenty of civilised countries whose citizens are forced to do a few days work for the State. And, after all, the taxes which we all pay are only an indirect form of compulsory labour.

*Payment of wages.* — Portuguese colonial legislation does not merely fix the wages and the quantity of food due to every native labourer; it also enjoins the local authorities to supervise payment. Unscrupulous officials, delegated to make payments on behalf of the Government, may have wronged the natives; the Government itself may have been lax in supervising payment by individuals; but these are purely exceptional occurrences for which the Govern-

ment cannot be held responsible, since it punishes them whenever they come to its notice. I should add that the native can complain to his administrative superior, or demand his protection ; I know of no case in which a native who has been unjustly treated in the matter of payment has been refused a hearing by his superiors.

*Apprentices.* — The statement that apprentices in skilled trades, seeing the unfair way in which workmen are sometimes treated in regard to payments, are no longer willing to learn, is wholly incorrect. In all those twelve years I never found the pupils in our missionary schools ceasing to attend because the fear of not getting their wages later on had discouraged them. In Angola, and still more on the Congo, the workmen are well thought of and appreciated, and are, moreover, very well paid. That has always been my experience.

*Road-making.* — It is a futile charge that roads have been made in excess of the colony's needs. Roads connecting one important place with another may not be absolutely essential, but they are always useful. What country in the world can be accused of having too many roads ? As to the charge that the implements and tools used by the natives on Government work are very primitive and rudimentary, I may say that I have never seen better in the course of my travels through the French and Belgian colonies.

*Native officials.* — Are the native Government officials, known as "*cipaios*", sometimes cruel to their native brothers ? In all countries the negro invested with authority displays a despotic tendency at the expense of the negro beneath him. But I should blush to hear it said that the colonial authorities of my country approved, and therefore did not punish, abuses of that kind. I have observed them from time to time, but I have ascertained that in every case they were severely punished.

*Relations between Portuguese colonists and natives.* — "The blacks feel that the Portuguese are leagued against them." This is untrue. The simple, open, and affable character and temperament of the Portuguese people makes it easy, as a general rule, for them to keep on friendly terms with the natives. I have often heard Germans, Frenchmen, and Belgians say that the negroes are nowhere better treated than by the Portuguese colonists.

*Education, medical care, and justice for the native.* — "The Government provides nothing in the way of schools, medical care or justice for the people as a recompense for the heavy burden of toil it lays upon them." On this point, above all others, I say that the statement is untrue. The Portuguese Government has not deserved such an accusation. In a highly important book of which much will be heard in the future, recently published under the title of *Jus Missionarium*, by the celebrated German priest Grentrup, reference is made to Portuguese colonial missionary legislation, which is explicitly recognised as being broader and more generous than that of any other civilised nation. The following is the expression used : — *Non est alia natio quae systemate subventionis legalis tam liberali utatur* — "There is no other nation which follows such a liberal system of State assistance." Indeed, of all nations Portugal spends most money on her missionaries, and her object in doing so is of course to enable them to educate and civilise the negro, and to cooperate as far as is in their power.



in uplifting the black race by training its members to be useful and valuable members of society. The same may be said of the medical care given to the natives, for there is no place of any importance that has not its hospital, doctor, and male nurse, while in the smaller places first-aid posts, ambulances, etc., are not lacking. The Portuguese missions themselves (which constitute by no means a small organisation) are obliged to distribute medicaments free of charge to the poor, and receive a special Government grant for that purpose. Only two years ago the High Commissioner of Angola held in the capital of the province a most successful Congress on Colonial Medicine, which was attended by the principal medical authorities in foreign countries who were interested in the subject. The results have already shown that this Congress has been of great value not only to our own colonies but to African colonies in general. As regards justice for the natives, I do not think there is a better system in the colonies of any other country, or one different in any way, except that in our colonies capital punishment does not exist.

I would conclude, Sir, speaking on my conscience, by saying : I am a Portuguese Catholic missionary and a member of a missionary society working throughout Africa. I am consequently in close touch with my Belgian, French, and English colleagues, and know more or less what goes on in their colonies. And I venture to state without hesitation that the negroes are not better treated in their colonies than in ours, nor better paid, nor better taught, nor better civilised. On the contrary, there is no country in the world which does more for the moral and material welfare of her native subjects than Portugal. Why, therefore, are we accused ? As I see it, it is a matter of bad luck ; it is our misfortune. But I should certainly have to modify my impression if it occurred again.

In submitting these simple and honest opinions to your distinguished judgment, I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) Fr. José PACHECO MONTE.

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RAFFINERIE COLONIALE  
AVENUE DE L'INDE

LISBON, August 20th, 1925.

To the Minister for Foreign Affairs,  
Lisbon.

This Company has seen a report on the employment of native labour in the Portuguese colonies, submitted to the League of Nations by Dr. Ross, of Wisconsin, which contains a reference to our Company. If all the statements in the report are no truer than that which concerns us, we are bound to conclude that it contains nothing but incorrect and unsubstantiated information.

We have endeavoured to organise our staff and our plant so that our native labourers should have the healthiest possible quarters, good food, medical care always at hand, compulsory vaccination, and well-arranged hospitals. Our managing and supervisory staff treat the natives according to the humane

principles which have always guided the course of Portuguese colonisation, and follow the excellent regulations which exist for the protection of natives. We are convinced that no better arrangements and no better methods of treating the natives than ours can be found in any colony of any country. We pay our native labourers the whole of their wages under a supervision which cannot be evaded, and those wages are so adequate that we have permanently in our service thousands of voluntary workers from British Central Africa, and even from what was formerly German West Africa. The only labourers who are not paid by the Company are those whose contracts are made before the authorities, in which case we have to hand the wages to the authorities, who pass them on to the natives.

The Company has asked leave of the Government to pay these labourers directly, as in the case of those whom it engages directly. Its reason was not that there can be any doubt that they get the money, but that it wished to avoid giving occasion for unjustified charges like those of Prof. Ross by making these payments at different times and in different ways.

Our Company has always operated in Portuguese territory; it has more than 15,000 native labourers constantly in its employ; and, with the aid of a mainly Portuguese staff, it has created a great industry in the province of Mozambique. We deny the accusations levelled against us, and we take this opportunity to protest against facile criticisms of the colonial administration of the Portuguese Government, which is highly humane and adopts the right attitude towards native customs and the native individuality. We associate our protest with those of such persons as the correspondent of that important paper the *African World* (a copy of whose article is enclosed), who have taken the side of the Portuguese Government against its calumniators and detractors.

We have the honour to be,  
Sir, etc.,

p.p. SENA SUGAR ESTATES Ltd.

(signed) THOMAS DE PAIVA RAPOSO.



## DECLARATION

*addressed by the African National Party (of Portugal) to the League of Nations.*

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To the President of the Temporary Slavery Commission.

The undersigned representatives of the African National Party (of Portugal), all of whose members are of the black race and belong to the Portuguese colonies in Africa, formally protest, both personally and in the name of that Party, against the report made by Professor Ross, who draws unjustified generalisations from isolated and unverified facts dating from earlier periods of abnormality, in the course of which certain abuses, exceptional in character and of a kind to be found in every colony, were committed.

The Portuguese Government, the High Commissioners of Angola and Mozambique, and the Governors General of Cape Verde, Guinea and St. Thomas and Prince, have taken satisfactory action on the complaints made to them by the African National Party against these isolated and exceptional abuses, and have brought strong administrative and judicial pressure to bear upon the offenders and their accomplices, to the unanimous gratification of African opinion in all the provinces.

The undersigned further declare that the present position in the Portuguese colonies in Africa is satisfactory to all who, in their zeal for the cause of Justice and Human Dignity, are working honestly and without political bias for the defence of the native.

It was in the Portuguese colony of Angola that there took place in 1923, under the auspices of the Central Government and at the instance of the High Commissioner, General Norton de Mattos, the first International Congress on Tropical Medicine, whose recommendations were designed for the scientific protection of the life and health of the native races and their physical improvement.

The undersigned therefore express the hope that the League of Nations will take all possible steps to promote and hasten the execution of the Congress's recommendations in every colony in the world.

Geneva, September 8th, 1925.

(Signed) João de CASTRO, *President.*  
Miguel MACHADO,  
Mario FERRO,  
Borges SANTOS,  
José MONTEIRO DE CASTRO.

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